5: Schwimmer E-4,5 (1966-1967) 1973
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include gifts to persons of the same household? It would have been easy enough to lay down a rule that this kind of gift should be excluded from the survey and nor mentioned by informants, but I decided that it was not for me to start defining to the Orokaiva what was meant by a phrase like *ba ikari* 'to give taro'. Evidently food given to household members was, in certain circumstances, regarded as a gift. I recorded a total of 265 such 'transactions' from fourteen households during the survey period. Among those who mentioned such 'transactions' were some of my most helpful informants. At the beginning of the survey, household members were only sporadically mentioned but the number of mentions increased as the survey proceeded, until a pattern emerged.[2] A gift of food from wife to husband was never mentioned. A gift to a household member other than a natural or adopted child of one or both of the marriage partners was always included. Married daughters and sons old enough to live in a bachelor's house were always included. What confused informants most was how to regard gifts to younger sons and daughters.

Some parents included their children if they were old enough to be of school age. Others included the boys if they had gone through the 'birthday' ceremony which nowadays takes the place of initiation and included the boys if they had been through puberty seclusion. Others again did not include their dependent children at all. There was no uniform pattern. I ascribe the confusion to two factors: first, it used to be customary for children to start working in the garden at a very early age, doing whatever was within their capacity and making some contribution to the household economy. Boys would be given their own small garden plots at an early age and their sisters would fulfil some feminine tasks (planting, harvesting) in these plots. When schooling became general in the district, the children ceased making that kind of contribution. Secondly, school 'lunches' were mostly taken by the children every morning and eaten on the school grounds. These lunches were identical in form to the intra-village taro gifts: they were a meal of cooked taro cooked by the mother and taken out of the home.

Intra-household taro gifts were reported to me in too inconsistent a fashion to permit statistical analysis, but they were interesting as they revealed the household to be, in itself, a minuscule exchange system. This system was intact to a greater extent in Hohorita, where schooling ends at grade 3, than in Sivepe where adolescents are mostly at school rather than in the garden. At Hohorita adolescents grew and (if they were females) harvested vegetable food, gave this to their mothers, and their mothers fed and looked after them. The same principle applied in Sivepe to adults living with their adult and married children, brothers or sisters. Even very old men and women do what gardening they can to make a contribution. The record shows, in the case of some of these old people, that they made hardly any contribution at all during the survey period. As this was a period when taro was becoming scarce, their small gardens were exhausted, but a few months later some of them would again have crops of their own.

Most of the older people who thus depended on gifts for their sustenance were not fed by one household only, though usually one household bore most of the burden. However, wherever there was a helpless old person, there were always at least two regularly contributing households in addition to the one to which that person was attached. We must distinguish, among the Orokaiva,

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824 431 125 592 between co-residence and commensality, notions which the Orokaiva themselves clearly do not regard as synonymous. Persons who are co-resident are always, in practice, at least in part commensal, they are not necessarily wholly so. Not only old people but also bachelors and young women, single or married, receive gifts of taro from other households of which they are the specific recipients. Food they receive in their own residence may therefore be classed as a gift if they have not supplied raw food to the housewife on the same day.

824 431 621 128 To what extent is there a notion that food gifts should be balanced as between donor and recipient? According to the statistics, perfect balance is uncommon and occurs most often where exchanges are somewhat infrequent. In Table VI/1, I classified households according to the degree of balance in all intra-village taro gifts made to persons resident in other households. The code number 0 indicates perfect balance in the total number of gifts sent and received; the code number 6 indicates an imbalance greater than the proportion 75:25. Intermediate code numbers indicate a lesser amount of imbalance. At first sight, Tables VI/1 and VI/2 suggest that little importance is attached to balance in food gifts. In more than half the households, the total imbalance exceeds the proportion 60:40. Nor does there seem to be an ideological charter enjoining a person who has received a food gift to return that gift in the near future. The donor says he expects no return gift. If one asks him why he has made the gift he never mentions services or gifts received in the past for which he may be reciprocating. He will say, 'because that man is my wife's father's sister's son' or whatever the kinship relation may be.

A more careful look at the figures, however, makes one wonder whether such indifference to balance is the whole story. Some informants stated that though the donor expects no return gift, the recipient often likes to make one. Some families are more punctilious than others in this respect. The most punctilious of all was the leading family of Seho (H5, H12, H13, H14, H20, H21). They all had an imbalance smaller than the proportion 55:45. Only one other household in the sample achieved this low score.

● [739] In most of the households where there is an extreme imbalance, the explanation is that the household contains aged people who require help, or that the household is deeply involved in giving help to aged people. This factor accounts for the imbalance in households 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 10, 18, 18a, and 19. The imbalance in households 8 and 9 is explained by the fact that householder 8 was [166] helping householder 9 to build a house. Householders 5, 15, and 17 were immigrants from Garombi who gave more than they received, probably because of an anxiety to become accepted and build up good relations in their new place of residence.

824 431 571 621 Finally, the notion of balance is implicit in the timing of many of the taro gifts. It was a very common practice indeed to make a return gift on the same day as a gift of taro had been received, or on the day immediately following. Though informants told me they were under absolutely no obligation to respond so urgently or to respond at all, the record shows that in practice they frequently did so. We must therefore conclude that the Orokaiva do have some notions which lead them to reciprocate taro gifts, even though there is no rule enjoining immediate balanced exchange.

I would suggest that the Orokaiva proceed from a notion that taro is a

such cases much of the meat is distributed. However, if an individual wishes to organise a pig-feast he normally arranges an initial exchange of pigs with another person (frequently with one to whom he had previously given a piglet to look after until it matured), only killing and preparing the pig so received. Similarly, when a number of people are hunting together, whoever catches anything will immediately make a gift of it to another member of the party.

A small proportion of all transactions comprises goods given in charity to the old and infirm, one item falling specifically in this category being firewood. In such cases no return is expected.

(ii) Labour services. Of the sample's activity time, 3.9 per cent was directed to rendering labour services, almost all of which were on a non-monetary basis. As with subsistence produce an overall balance is registered but, since assistance is frequently reciprocated in the form of gifts of food, this fact conceals substantial internal variations within the sample. Of labour services acquired, 55 per cent were directed to two men: Umbahapa, the oldest person and a widower living alone, and Linton, the most active and highly regarded of the men,[1] while eleven individuals received no assistance whatsoever. By contrast all but one individual gave some assistance to a member of another household and no one person accounted for more than 12 per cent of all assistance rendered.

Similarly, as demonstrated by data on the composition of work groups,[2] the range of activities over which labour services are exchanged is very restricted. Eighty-eight per cent fall within the subsistence sector and of these over half occur in construction and sago-making. Among cash cropping activities assistance is commonly provided only in the pulping and washing of coffee (see Fig.10:1). Such services are therefore largely confined to activities where, firstly, the labour resources of the nuclear family are normally inadequate for their effective completion, as, for example, construction and sago-making and, secondly, immediate compensation is expected, as, again, in sago-making, in harvesting yams, helping with the exchanging and butchering of pigs, and hunting.

(iii) Storebought goods. While products of the external sector circulate through the gift exchange system, acquisitions predominate and comprise 88 per cent of the total volume transacted. Goods received from the researchers apart, most derive from relatives currently residing outside the subsistence village context - either as settlers at Sangara or in wage employment. The data incorporate

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[1] For a detailed account of the activities of these two men, see pp.117-21, 126-7.

[2] See pp.114-17.

A, [See Category 554, pp. 117-119; Category 461, pp. 120-121; Category 512, pp. 126-127--Analyst]
B, [See Category 461, pp. 114-117--Analyst]

437 with immediate kin and with individuals receiving acknowledged support from her. In the first category are two daughters residing with their spouses' families (one in Sivepe and the other in a neighbouring village) during the spouses' absence in wage employment. The second comprises her brother's son and his wife, who resided briefly in Sivepe but were without adequate food resources of their own, and her sister's daughter's daughter, previously [431] cared for by Ciga, plus the girl's present guardian. Finally, significant gifts of food were received from a cross-cousin residing in another village.

Rodney Gill. With no significant food supplies of his own Rodney Gill only receives subsistence produce and disposes of his one abundant resource, labour. His exchanges are predominately with immediate kin - his brother and brother's wife residing next door - [431] and they are the sole recipients of assistance in cash cropping activities. However, help with subsistence tasks is given to, and gifts of food received from, a wider range of individuals, all belonging to households located at his end of the village. Rodney Gill has no important exchange relationships outside Sivepe.

437 Umbahapa. As an aged and partially lame widower Umbahapa is dependent on regular 431 gifts of food from his sister and a married daughter living next to him and he normally 737 disposes of little himself. This pattern was temporarily altered during the survey by the decision to fell one of his sago palms. This resulted in assistance being received from, and sago distributed to, a large number of villagers. In fact these transactions were only nominally Umbahapa's since he had delegated to his sister's son, Linton, the responsibility of organising the work and distributing the sago, while, prior to its distribution, the sago was held in his sister's husband's house. Participation in this venture was determined by individual need for food rather than kinship criteria.

Storebought goods, in particular an axe, provided the most important gifts from kin outside the village, such items being the ones he is least likely to obtain as a result of his own endeavours.

437 The cases discussed above outline the pattern of sustained interchanges among individual villagers. However, they do not indicate the whole range of an individual's close genealogical kin since the network of exchanges is directly influenced by considerations of distance and by the links established through marriage between the clan branches represented in the village. The first imposes severe restrictions on the movement of goods, particularly subsistence